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"Where the Blazed Trail Crosses the Boulevard"

'Partners Again' the Only New Play That Appeals to Public

Playwrights of Other Productions Presented as Season Nears End Appear to Have Failed to Master the Skill of the Dramatist.

By LAWRENCE REAMER.

THE public, in spite of the more or less faint hearted efforts of the theater managers to keep up the hoop-la, has apparently decided that the season is at an end. Recent first night representations have not even succeeded in filling the playhouses. At least three productions which would, at other times, have awakened some degree of interest among theatergoers failed even to draw enough of an audience to occupy the parquet.

Among these lukewarm affairs is not to be included, of course, such a sensationally popular piece as "Partners Again," at the Selwyn Theater. Obviously the psychological minute had arrived for some more Potash and Perlmutter fun. Just as obviously was it a demand of good showmanship that the two actors who originally incarnated these amusing men of business should again represent them. The public wanted to see them together again, whatever Montagu Glass and Jules Eckert Goodman might do in the matter of a play. So the Selwyns have shrewdly assembled once again all the parts that were indispensable from the first to a genuine Potash and Perlmutter success. The enthusiastic response of the public will keep the Selwyn Theater crowded for months.

But for other recent theatrical experiments there has been little cordiality. The mind of the public is plainly not on the drama just now. After a while the summer musical plays will begin to arrive and hot weather theatricals will have a fillip. Now the days of indifference have quite obviously set in and there is no disputing the point. The anxiety of the managers to keep their theaters occupied so long as possible is easily comprehensible. Even a small degree of success under the present prevailing plan of cooperation tends to diminish overhead expenses. There are none of the ambitious dramas which usually come to the assistance of the impresarios at this time. Conditions have not been favorable to the creation of any of these costly efforts. So the impresario must rely on the spoken play so long as he can. Judging by appearances the effort will not be extended.

It is unfortunate that the plays with which the managers have sought to woo the public back into the playhouses at this time are not of a character that would have been deeply interesting at any stage of the season. Arnold Bennett's "What the Public Wants," at the Garrick Theater, is written vivaciously and deals with a topic that ought to appeal to the intelligent theatergoer, although managers profess a prejudice against dramas dealing with newspapers and the stage. There should be enough in any play from Mr. Bennett on this theme to keep alive the audience's interest. Yet the reverse is true.

After two acts of the four there is little enough to hold any listener. No story develops. The talk is out of all proportion to the dramatic content of the scenes. And the result is the ennui which always results from a bit of fiction put on the stage in its original form. Dividing such a bit of comedy as "What the Public Wants" into acts instead of chapters does not make it a play.

The same is true of Eden Philpotts's work, "The Shadow." It is a more or less absorbing bit of narrative, but there is no trace of stagecraft in its revelation. Maybe Mr. Philpotts is just as contemptuous of what the mandarins call the technique of the theater as Mr. Bennett has declared himself to be. The result is that "The Shadow," at the Klaw Theater, is nothing more than the transference of a novel to the footlights. What is designed to succeed in one field naturally fails to make any effect in another. So the three acts of this story of Dartmoor life pass without a thrill on the part of the watchers. They neither warm to its emotion nor listen indulgently to its rather tentative efforts at humor. Again has the novelist neglected to stick to his last, with lamentable results. Probably the author of "The Shadow" would wonder why it failed to make the same appeal to the world that his novels of life in this quarter of England have done. He argues that the dialect is there and so are the ways of the peasant folk. Their lives and thoughts are just as faithfully represented as ever they were in one of his books. Then why does not the play make the same impression that his novels do? The answer is that there is no element of a drama in his work. It is, to be sure, in dialogue, and it is divided into acts. But the mechanism which alone can put the dramatic pulse into its veins is lacking.

The same is true of "Creditors," in which August Strindberg has, beyond the use of dialogue, made little or no reference to dramatic form. Husband Number One harangues Husband Number Two until the unfortunate man realizes that the woman who has been the wife of both has made such completely selfish use of him as to destroy his independence of personality altogether. When the wife returns, this unhappy man upbraids her and shows himself completely the creature of her will. Thus there are two interviews to begin the play. A third ends it. This takes place between Husband Number One and his former wife. He humiliates her by making her reveal her love for him and so mortifies the listening husband that a sudden crisis in his disease causes his death.

These interviews follow one another. Not a fact in the relations of these three persons, which really make up the drama, is revealed by action. A tells B and B tells C, and there you have it. There are, of course, no means of knowing just what popular success these naturalistic plays of Strindberg may have had in the northern countries. It may be that the theatergoers of these nations love talk enough to sit through a series of dialogues unaccompanied by any real dramatic action. Occasional movement there may be. Of action, however, that advances the story, there is not a trace. Independent of what the popular history of these plays may have been on their native heath, it is moderately certain that here they would not pay for the illumination of a theater's electric sign. It seems affection to say that Strindberg writes according to his own technique. There is no recognizable theater technique of any kind in such a play as "Creditors." Although it was acted the other night in three divisions at the Green-

Spence Is an Expert At Making Out Bills

Ralph Spence, motion picture editor and author of the subtitles of "A Connecticut Yankee," recently took an assignment to cut down a reel of pictures. Spence edited the reel and submitted his bill for \$350.

"This is ridiculous," said the owner of the film. "I can get a reel of pictures trimmed for \$10 anywhere. Take this bill back and cut it down to a reasonable figure."

Spence took the bill back to his office and submitted the following statement: Cutting one reel..... \$10 Knowing what to cut..... 340



MISS ETHEL LEVEY in "GO EASY, MABEL" LONGACRE



MISS DOROTHEA GRIFFIN, MAKING HER STAGE DEBUT in "THE BRONX EXPRESS" WITH THE COBURN ASTOR



MISS FANIA MARINOFF in "THE CHARLATAN" TIMES SQUARE THEATER



MISS EILEEN HUBAN in "HINDLE WAKES" VANDERBILT



MISS FLORENCE RITTENHOUSE in "THE RED GERANIUM" PRINCESS



MISS DORIS KENYON in "UP THE LADDER" PLAYHOUSE



MRS. THOMAS WHIFFEN in "THE ADVERTISING OF KATE" RITZ THEATER



MISS ADELE ASTAIRE in "FOR GOODNESS SAKE" LYRIC

Olga Petrova to Play In Brooklyn This Week

At Teller's Shubert Theater this week Mme. Olga Petrova will appear in person in her own play, "The White Peacock," assisted by the company which appeared at the Comedy Theater in Manhattan.

At the Majestic Theater Joseph M. Gaites will present "Up in the Clouds," the musical comedy which was favorably received at the Lyric Theater earlier this season.

"Lightnin'" starts the fourth and last week of its return engagement at the Montauk, with Milton Nobles and Miss Bessie Bacon in the principal roles.

Miss Alice Brady, appearing in person in vaudeville, will remain in Brooklyn a second week, moving to the Orpheum. Others will be Gallagher and Shean, Miss Alice Stanley and Miss Kate Ellmore and Sam Williams.

BILL AT THE COLUMBIA. "Chuckles of 1922," Jean Bodin's latest and best burlesque production, enters the second week of its summer run at the Columbia Theater, with Clark and McCullough providing plenty of fun.

Vaudeville Headliners At New York Theaters

At the Palace this week the headliners will be Ted Lewis and his Metropolitan Band, the Gaminos in Spanish dances, Miss Blossom Seeley in syncope, Williams and Wolfus, Percy Bronson and Miss Winnie Baldwin and the Marlon Morgan Dancers, remaining for a second week. Others will be Seed and Austin, Harry Johnson and several surprise acts.

The chief acts at other vaudeville houses follow: RIVERSIDE—Karyl Norman, Marjory Vedie and Ota Gysl. EIGHTY-FIRST STREET—Al Moore and U. S. Jazz Band, Miss Vera Gordon and Don Davidson in the photoplay "The Good Provider."

LOEW'S STATE—Miss Sally Fields, William Farnum in the photoplay "Shackles of Gold."

PROCTOR'S FIFTH AVENUE—William Rock, Runaway Four. PROCTOR'S TWENTY-THIRD STREET—Lewis and Dody, J. K. Emmett.

PROCTOR'S FIFTY-EIGHTH STREET—James C. Morton, Leonard and Willard. PROCTOR'S 126TH STREET—Jack Wilson, Hans Robert.

Calendar of First Performances

MONDAY.

LONGACRE THEATER—Miss Ethel Levey returns to the legitimate in "Go Easy, Mabel," a musical comedy, with book, lyrics and music by Charles George. Miss Estelle Winwood is featured in the cast, and others will be Will Deming, Arthur Aylesworth, Russell Mack and Miss Eileen Van Biene. Bertram Harrison and Julian Alfred staged the production.

RITZ THEATER—Leo Kugel will present "The Advertising of Kate," a three act comedy by Annie Nathan Meyer. The story concerns a young woman who pursues a New York business career. The cast includes Miss Mary Boland, Mrs. Thomas Whiffen, Byron Beasley and Leslie Austen.

PRINCESS THEATER—"The Red Geranium," a play in four acts by Ruth M. Woodward, will be presented by the Greenwich Village Producing Company. It deals with certain phases of life and free love in New York's Bohemian quarter. The cast includes William S. Rainey, Miss Florence Rittenhouse, Miss Mary Donnelly and Miss Eleanor Coates. The settings were designed by Gleason Thurckmorton.

BELMONT THEATER—The French Players, extending their engagement for a week, will present "La Belle Aventure," by De Fiers and De Caillavet. Charles Schauten and Mme. Ditz will play the roles which were portrayed by Charles Cherry and Miss Ann Murdock in the English version at the Lyceum Theater in 1914. Others in the cast will be Gaston Durlac, Pierre Jacmin and Edmond Vallee.

TUESDAY.

GREENWICH VILLAGE THEATER—The Comedy Company, under the direction of Grace Griswold, will revive "Blotted," by F. Tennyson Jesse and H. M. Harwood, which was done at the Playhouse by Margaret Anglin in 1917. In the cast are Miss Lois Bolton, Miss Sallie Williams, Miss Selena Royle, Lumden Hare and H. Langdon Bruce.

THURSDAY.

VANDERBILT THEATER—"Fanny Hawthorn," the new title given to Stanley Houghton's Lancashire play, "Hindle Wakes," will be presented by the Vanderbilt Producing Company. Miss Eileen Huban will have the title role, and others will be Herbert Lomas, Whitford Kane, Miss Gilda Leary and Louis Emery.

Did You Hear?

That Jeritza Will Sing 'Thais' and That a Play Grew Out of an Earache.

By LUCIEN CLEVELAND.

WHILE it is true that oaks from little acorns grow, it is not also understood that sometimes Broadway plays grow from little girl's earaches. But it was just in that way that "Bronx Express" came into existence. Oslip Dymow, its author, was spending the summer at Fur Rockaway three years ago. He had gone there with his family as a relief from the necessity of riding daily on the subway, which had been his custom for some time. So habitual had the practice become that he was familiar with all the advertisements which ornament the cars. So accustomed was he to watching them that he invented imaginary conversations between them, pictured what their conduct would be under certain conditions and altogether vivified the pictures.

But he had thought of them only when seated in the cars until he was awakened early one summer morning by the cries of his weeping daughter. She had an earache. The nearest physician could not be brought for some time. The child had to be quieted. Mr. Dymow thought of the subway people he had so often watched. So he spun a tale about them to the little girl. The pain ceased, and, at all events, she forgot it and fell asleep.

Then the idea of a play which should include these imaginary men and women in the advertisements occurred to the playwright. It was not long before "The Bronx Express" was finished as a play. It later saw the light on the stage of the Yiddish Art Theater.

Various managers sought to do the piece in English. A. H. Woods, William Harris, Jr., and George M. Cohan were named as possible producers. Finally Mr. and Mrs. Coburn gave the play to the Selwyn Theater. Mr. Dymow hopes from this description of the origin of the piece that nobody will get the idea that "The Bronx Express" is intended for little girls with the earache. It may put them to sleep, but it is not in the least intended as a soporific for the general public.

Marie Jeritza as "Thais."

One of the novelties of the forthcoming season at the Metropolitan Opera House will be the appearance of Marie Jeritza as Thais. The new soprano is now appearing in Vienna and some of the cities of Austria. The fees for which she was to appear ran so high in the currency of those countries and in reality represented so little in money that she notified the managers in all the opera houses in which she was to appear that she would sing for nothing.

The French Actors.

Charles Schauten, manager and leading actor of the company of French

players at the Belmont Theater had the unusual experience during the last week of seeing the little theater sold out for every performance, which is all but unprecedented in the recent history of organizations playing here in a foreign tongue. "Le Retour," by de Fiers and de Croisset, which was acted last week, is owned in English by one of the New York managers for next season, and it was only through the interference of the diplomatic agents of the French Government at Washington that permission was secured by the actors to appear in the piece. With the assurance from this same quarter that it will give every aid in securing the newest dramas of France for this company, the success of the return season of ten weeks next year seems more certain. This season will not be given at the Belmont, as Richard Herndon has arranged for a repertoire company to occupy his playhouse all next winter. Another playhouse has already been selected.

Morris Gest Speaks.

Morris Gest, who was talking the other day about the great success of the Chauve Souris—his seldom speaks of any other subject in his waking hours—called attention to the fact that the run of the Russian company differs from any of its predecessors in this city. "Never before in the history of American theatricals," Mr. Gest observed to the reporter for THE NEW YORK HERALD the other day, did any attraction in a foreign language play for 100 nights in New York without any change of bill. That has been the record of the Chauve Souris at the Forty-ninth Street Theater.

Mr. Gest might have added had he wanted to betray a little secret that the new program of these popular entertainers will be seen first on June 3.

G. & S. in London.

The six months' season of the Gilbert & Sullivan operas came to an end the other night at the Princess Theater in London. It was concluded with a representation of the work desired by most of the patrons. It was necessary owing to the close season to give part of two weeks. So the first act of "The Gondoliers," and the second act of "The Mikado," were sung before an enormous audience. Just as many were unable to obtain admittance.

Rupert D'Oyly Carte, the present representative of the family of the famous manager of the Savoy Theater, said that ever since 1881 a company had sung the operas in Cambridge and since 1884 in Oxford and that in both these two university towns there were always overflow audiences. He believes that the operas are in spite of their age, most popular with the younger generation. He also thinks they are better given than they ever were in spite of the "Savoy tradition."

No 'Villain' Role for Tiden in 'The Charlatan'

Frederick Tiden has so long been associated with the role of the villain on the stage that it was a difficult task for him to switch to play Count Gog-Nostro, the protagonist in "The Charlatan," Adolph Klaber's new mystery play at the Times Square Theater. For the Count, despite his being an etymological descendant of the famous quack, Joseph Balamo, immortalized by Dumas, is hardly a villain. And while Tiden finds a relief not to be hissed nightly, not to mention the matinee, he had to make over his "style" of acting.

However, Tiden has had enough experience to play almost any role without forcing himself. After graduating at Oxford he walked right into an engagement with Sir Herbert Tree as a general understudy at a pound a week. He came to this country twenty years ago with Nat Goodwin and Maxine Elliott in "When We Were Twenty-one" and since then has been in support of almost everybody. Now the rest of the cast are in support of him.

He has one unique distinction. He is the only actor playing a leading role along Broadway, who has neither written, nor desired to write a play. Instead, his avocation is music and some evidence of his ability in this one of the arts is shown by the fact that the orchestra at the Times Square play his own composition, "The Charlatan Waltz," as an overture to the play.

Goldwyn Adds R. A. Walsh To Staff of Directors

R. A. Walsh will film the R. A. Walsh Productions at the Goldwyn Studios in conjunction with the Goldwyn organization. It is announced.

Goldwyn has just made a contract with Marshall Neilan and elected him a director; arranged with Maurice Tourneur to direct a film version of Hall Caine's novel, "The Christian," in England; made a new contract with Rupert Hughes to write, direct and edit his own stories, in addition to giving Goldwyn first call on all his fiction, and contracted with Allen Holubar to produce the \$10,000 prize scenario, "Broken Chalks."

With the acquisition of Walsh, Goldwyn now has on his list of directors the men responsible for many of the biggest motion picture productions of the last four or five years.